
WHO IS THIS MAN?

24 ADVENT READINGS

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DAY 1: IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. (Col 1:15)

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. (Col 1:19-20)

³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. (Heb 1:3)

Who is Jesus in the image of?

Is he partially in God's image?

What does it mean for God to have his fullness dwell in Jesus?

What do you think it means for the Son to be the radiance of God's glory?

Can we see God the Father?

- ❖ Give thanks for Jesus, the image of the invisible God and that through him we can know the fullness of the Father, and know the radiance of God's glory.

DAY 2: WORD BECAME FLESH

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

What is Jesus called here? Why?

What did the Word do?

Where did he come from?

What does it mean to be 'full of grace and truth'?

How do we see the glory of God the Father?

- ❖ Thank God that he came to live among us. Pray that we might see and also proclaim his glory, grace and truth.

DAY 3: SON OF GOD

¹⁶ *As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:16-17)*

¹ *After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.*

² *There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. ³ Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.*

⁴ *Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”*

⁵ *While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!” (Matthew 17:1-5)*

What does God call Jesus?

What does it mean for Jesus to be the son of God?

What does God the Father think of Jesus?

What does God want us to do with Jesus?

Do you listen to Jesus? When do you find it hard to listen to Jesus?

- ❖ Give thanks that God has clearly proclaimed Jesus to be his Son, whom he loves. Pray that we might listen to him and obey his words.

DAY 4: CREATOR

¹ *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. (John 1:1-3)*

¹⁵ *The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (Col 1:15-17)*

What does it mean for Jesus to be before all things?

If Jesus made all things, who made Jesus?

If Jesus created all things, what does this mean about his authority over them?

Do you think of yourself as being “made by Jesus”?

- ❖ Give thanks for all the marvellous things Jesus has created, including you.

DAY 5: HUMBLING TO BE HUMAN

⁵ *In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:*

⁶ *Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;*

⁷ *rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

⁸ *And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death — even death on a cross! (Phil 2:5-8)*

What was Jesus before he became a man?

What did it mean for Jesus to become a man?

How therefore are we called to be with one another?

In what ways might we do that?

- ❖ Give thanks that Jesus humbled himself in becoming human and that he was willing to die for us all. Pray that we would have the mindset of Christ as we relate to one another.

DAY 6: EXALTED AS LORD

⁹ *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father (Phil 2:9-11)*

What happened to Jesus after his death?

Who did these things?

Do you think of Jesus as your Lord, or just a man?

How do we glorify God?

- ❖ Give glory to God for Jesus. Pray that more people on earth will exalt Jesus as their Lord, to the glory of God the Father

DAY 7: UNDER GOD'S AUTHORITY

²⁸ So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. ²⁹ The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him." ³⁰ Even as he spoke, many believed in him. (John 8:28-30)

³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!" (Mark 15:39)

²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. ²⁸ When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all. (1 Cor 15:24-28)

What is Jesus referring to when he talks about being lifted up?
How will people know he is the Son of Man / Son of God when he is lifted up?

Does this happen (Mark 15)?

Does Jesus act on his own?

Do you find it strange that even though Jesus is fully God, he still acts according to his Father's wishes?

- ❖ Give thanks that Jesus stays under the good authority of his Father. Pray that we will look to Jesus as a model of how to follow God's authority.

DAY 8: EVERLASTING RULER

⁸ *But about the Son he says,
“Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.
⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy.” (Hebrews 1:8-9)*

How long will the Son’s kingdom last?
Is that hard to imagine?
What will the Son’s rule be like?
Do you like the idea of this rule?

- ❖ Thank God for his rule, which is everlasting, just and righteous.

DAY 9: UNCHANGEABLE

But about the Son he says ...

But you remain the same, and your years will never end (Heb 1:8a, 12b)

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Heb 13:8)

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." (Rev 1:8)

What do these verses say about Jesus?

What does it mean for him to be unchangeable?

Is anyone else unchangeable (Rev 1:8)?

Can people ever be unchangeable?

- ❖ Give thanks to Jesus that he is unchangeable and therefore we can always trust in him and rely on him.

DAY 10: "I AM"

God said to Moses, "I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you'" (Ex 3:14)

⁵⁸ "Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" ⁵⁹ At this, they [the Jews] picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds. (John 8:58-59)

What name does God give Moses for himself in Exodus 3?

What does it mean?

How does Jesus describe himself in John 8?

What does Jesus mean by saying this?

Why did the Jews react the way they did?

- ❖ Pray that we might, like the Jews, realise that Jesus is claiming to be God, but instead that we will respond with joy and praise to Him.

DAY 11: TO BE WORSHIPPED

Do not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. (Ex 34:14)

And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." (Heb 1:6)

What is God's commandment about worshipping other gods?

Why? What does it mean for God to be jealous?

In Hebrews, what does God call on his angels to do to his Son?

Why?

How does this fit with his commandment in Exodus?

- ❖ Give praise to Jesus, knowing he is truly God and God himself calls us to praise and worship him.

DAY 12: FORGIVES SIN

⁵ *When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”*

⁶ *Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ⁷“Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”*

⁸ *Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things? ⁹Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? ¹⁰But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the man, ¹¹“I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” ¹²He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!” (Mark 2:5-12)*

What does Jesus offer the paralyzed man?

Why did the Jewish leaders question what Jesus said?

Were they right?

How did Jesus answer?

What does that mean about Jesus?

- ❖ Give thanks to God, like the people did, that Jesus can forgive our sins. Pray that Jesus will forgive your sins.

DAY 13: RECONCILER

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. (Col 1:19-20)

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (Eph 2:13)

What does it mean to be reconciled?
How did Jesus reconcile all things?

- ❖ Thank Jesus that he has reconciled all things to himself, including us, thanks to his blood shed on the cross.

DAY 14: REDEEMER

... Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. (Titus 2:13b-14)

⁴ But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. ⁶ Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir. (Gal 4:4-7)

What does it mean to be redeemed?

How does Jesus redeem us in Titus 2 and what is it for?

How do you act when you have been redeemed?

What is the benefit of redemption according to Galatians?

- ❖ Rejoice that because Jesus has redeemed you, you are one of God's people and his child, an heir to eternal life.

DAY 15: FIRST OF THE RESURRECTION

¹ On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. ² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. ⁵ In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ⁷ ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again’” ⁸ Then they remembered his words. (Luke 24:1-8)

²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. (1 Cor 15:20-23)

What happened to Jesus after he died?

How does this change the result of Adam’s sin?

What then will happen to us?

- ❖ Praise God that because Jesus has been resurrected, we too will follow him and also be made alive again.

DAY 16: IMMANUEL

¹⁴ *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. (Isa 7:14)*

²⁰ *But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”*

²² *All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).*

²⁴ *When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus*. (Matthew 1)*

*[*Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua which means “The Lord saves”.]*

What was the promise given by Isaiah?

How is this fulfilled in Jesus?

What does it mean for God to be with us?

What is the meaning of Jesus’ name?

How then should we think of Jesus?

When do you find it hard to remember these truths?

- ❖ Thank Jesus that he is God come to live with us and he is the one who saves. Pray for friends who need to know this.

DAY 17: LIGHT OF THE WORLD

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy (1 Peter 2:9-10)

⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) ¹⁰ and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹ Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them (Eph 5:8-11)

What does it mean for Jesus to be the light of the world?

What is walking in darkness like?

How do we walk in the light?

Are you walking in the light that Jesus gives?

- ❖ Thank Jesus that he is the light of life and in him there is no darkness. Pray for help to live as a person of the light in goodness, righteousness and truth because you are God's special possession and chosen person.

DAY 18: GOOD SHEPHERD

¹¹ “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. ¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

¹⁴ “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father —and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life —only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.” (John 10:11-18)

How is a shepherd different from a hired hand?

How is Jesus a good shepherd?

Why is Jesus a good shepherd?

What will Jesus do for his sheep?

Who are Jesus’ sheep?

- ❖ Give thanks that Jesus cares for people dearly, including you. Pray that more of your friends and family will come to know Jesus as their shepherd.

DAY 19: BREAD OF LIFE

³⁵ *Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. (John 6:35)*

⁴⁸ *I am the bread of life.* ⁴⁹ *Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died.* ⁵⁰ *But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die.* ⁵¹ *I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."* (John 6:48-51)

How is the bread of life different from bread we eat?

How is Jesus the bread of life?

How do you eat this bread?

- ❖ Praise God that with Jesus we have true and eternal life. Pray that you might trust this every day and live fully on the bread of life.

DAY 20: PRINCE OF PEACE

⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this (Isaiah 6:9-10)

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. (Col 1:19-20)

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups [Jews & Gentiles] one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. (Eph 2:14-18)

What promises are made about the child in Isaiah?

How does Jesus fulfill them in Colossians 1 and Ephesians 2?

- ❖ Give thanks that Jesus brings peace by saving us and bringing us back to God. Pray also for peace in relationships through unity in what Christ has done.

DAY 21: FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

³⁷ You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. (Acts 1:37-38)

¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁸ “Here is my servant whom I have chosen,
the one I love, in whom I delight;
I will put my Spirit on him,
and he will proclaim justice to the nations.

¹⁹ He will not quarrel or cry out;
no one will hear his voice in the streets.

²⁰ A bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out,
till he has brought justice through to victory.

²¹ In his name the nations will put their hope.” (Matthew 12:17-20)

²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (John 14:26-27) ... ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. (John 16:13)

What does it mean for Jesus to have the Spirit of God?

What does the Spirit do in us?

- ❖ Thank God for filling Jesus with his Spirit to help him as he lived on earth. Thank God for giving us his Spirit today so that we can know the truth.

DAY 22: HEAD OF THE CHURCH

And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy (Col 1:18)

¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰ he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. (Eph 1:18-23)

What does it mean for Jesus to be head of the church?

How do we think of Jesus then in church?

What is the church to Jesus?

How then should we view ourselves?

- ❖ Give thanks that Jesus is the head of the church. Pray that the church will represent Jesus on earth with grace and love.

DAY 23: LORD & GOD

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:24-29)

Who does Thomas realise Jesus is?

Why didn't he believe before now?

Would you also like to have seen Jesus?

Do you believe in Jesus?

- ❖ Give thanks that we can trust the bible accounts about Jesus and therefore we do not have to see him with our own eyes. Pray that we will always do so.

DAY 24: WHO IS THIS MAN TO YOU?

⁶⁶ *From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.*

⁶⁷ *"You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve.*

⁶⁸ *Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."* (John 6:66-69)

When it seemed hard to follow Jesus, many people left him.

When are you tempted not to follow Jesus?

What is Simon Peter's response?

Do you believe what he said?

Do you trust that Jesus has the words of eternal life?

- ❖ Give thanks that through Jesus we do have the words of eternal life. Pray that you will never forget it. Pray for others to know and love Jesus as their own Lord and Saviour, the Holy One of God.

NOTES

All Bible references are New International Version (NIV11).

If an activity is wanted, all the daily headings could be written out and pinned up on a Christmas tree or advent calendar as they are read.

References for further reading:

- *Big Truths for Young Hearts*, Bruce A Ware
- *The Ology*, Marty Machowski
- *Training Hearts Teaching Minds*, Starr Meade

This is designed start on December 1 & to finish on December 24.

